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REMARKS

Applicants invention is directed to articles of manufacture comprising a core material and a surface material, wherein the core material is a wood composite and the surface material is a high pressure laminate. In accordance with the invention the wood composite is bonded to the high pressure laminate with a foamed polyvinyl acetate emulsion-based adhesive. Articles of manufacture encompassed by the invention include countertops, architectural panels, flipper doors and the like.

Claims 12-14 and 21 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102 (b) as anticipated by or, in the alternative, under 35 U.S.C. § 103 (a) as being obvious over Karszes (U.S. Patent No. 3,891,788). Claims 12-17, 21 and 22 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102 (b) as anticipated by or, in the alternative, under 35 U.S.C. § 103 (a) as being obvious over Mafoti et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,804,618). Claim 18 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103 (a) as being obvious over Karszes (U.S. Patent No. 3,891,788 in view of Mafoti et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,804,618). In each rejection the examiner urges that use of a foamed adhesive is a process limitation that carries no patent weight unless shown to produce a different product. Applicants submit that use of a foamed adhesive does produce a patentable distinct product.


As disclosed by applicants, a product prepared using a foamed adhesive unexpectedly results in a product that has the same strength, yet requires less adhesive. The cited art neither discloses nor suggests that an adhesive may be foamed, e.g., to about 20% to about 60 % by volume, as set forth in claim 13, and used to successfully prepare products such as countertops and the like. A product prepared using an amount of wet adhesive is clearly different than a product prepared using 20 % to 60 % less adhesive, e.g. using an adhesive foamed from 20 to 60 % by volume. The product is different when it is newly made, i.e., a

newly laminated product will be less wet, and after it has fully cured or dried, i.e., the final dry product will contain less adhesive residue and will show the presence of air voids throughout.

None of the prior art teaches or even suggest use of a foamed polyvinyl acetate based adhesives, to bond a wood composite to a high pressure laminate. The use of a foamed adhesive does provide a different product and is of patentable weight.

Reconsideration and the withdrawal of the Section 102 Section 103 rejections is requested.

Respectfully submitted,


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